
From: Charles Ketchen [cketchen@bcn.net]
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 2:09 PM
To: Williams, Catrice (DTC)
Subject: Proposed Regional Service Quality Investigation

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As per your recent (Feb.9) request for comment regarding the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable's proposed investigation of Verizon Massachusetts' basic service quality in Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties, the Town of Alford definitely has concerns and would like to be included on the service list for this proposal.

The Board of Selectmen receive ongoing reports/complaints of service interruptions and delays in correction. We have also made numerous attempts to contact Verizon regarding internet access and cell service, trying to get them to commit to a time frame for upgrading their lines and services. Right now, due to Alford's hilly terrain, we rely primarily on dial up service for internet access. Not only is this extremely slow and out-dated, customers often are disconnected by what providers call "line noise" related to telephone connections.

Verizon officials have been vague and noncommittal as to their plans/schedules for upgradeing their wires - which would allow Alford to access more high speed/quality connections and service.

We feel the message we're being sent is that we do not offer enough customers to make it worth Verizon's attention. We feel, however, that regular upgrading of equipment and services should be available regardless of population. In this day and age, internet (and cell phone) access is no longer a luxury.

We are very much in favor of your investigation, as we feel its outcome will provide more equitable treatment (by Verizon) of our smaller towns and their citizens.

Sincerely, Charles F. Ketchen, Chairman
Board of Selectmen
Town of Alford, MA